

ACP-EU RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATION

The ACP-EU Council of Ministers,

HAVING regard to Decision No.2/LXXV/02 of the 75th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers held in Punta Cana in June 2002, on the ACP Vision for Sustainable Development,

NOTING the Meeting of ACP, EU Member States and European Commission's experts held on 29-30 July 2002 in Cape Town, South Africa,

RECOGNIZING the essential role of scientific and technological research as a fundamental engine for sustainable development in ACP States,

NOTING the commitment of the international community through the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) adopted on 4 September 2002, to launch concerted efforts to harness the contributions of science and technology to sustainable development with particular reference to paragraphs 99 and 102 namely:

- To promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and the development, transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries and countries in transition on favourable terms,
- To build greater capacity in science and technology for sustainable development with action to improve collaboration and partnerships on research and development and their widespread application among research institutions, universities, the private sector, governments, NGOs and networks, as well as between and among scientists and academics of developing and developed countries and this regard encourage networking with and between centres of scientific excellence in developing countries,

NOTING that inequalities in the way knowledge is produced and used are widening the gap between poor and rich countries,

RECOGNIZING that the EC's Strategy for Sustainable Development seeks to attain the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the target of halving extreme poverty by 2015, in this regard it pledges to promote research on issues related to sustainable development and to develop frameworks for regional and sub-regional cooperation,

NOTING the launch Conference of the EC 6th RTD Framework Programme in November 2002,

1. recalls the conclusions of the EU Development Council of 5 June 1997 on the need for a coherent overall approach between the RTD Framework Programme and the development cooperation programmes,
2. Acknowledges the ACP Vision for Sustainable Development, approved by the ACP Heads of States and Government at their Third Summit held in Nadi, Fiji 18-19 July 2002, and the Declaration and Plan of Action approved at the ACP Ministerial Forum on Research for Sustainable Development held in Cape Town on 28 July 2002,
3. Notes the decision of the ACP Group of States to support an initiative in the area of S&T Innovations and Capacity Building in ACP States,
4. Welcomes the opening up of the European Research Area through international scientific cooperation to provide opportunities for ACP-EU research collaboration,
5. Supports the increased possibility for researchers from third countries, including the ACP countries, to participate in the key thematic priorities of the EC 6th Framework Programme (FP6) of direct interest to them, as well as in the international cooperation activities specifically targeted to them,
6. Encourages the full use of existing instruments of development co-operation for the attainment by the ACP of the Millennium Development Goals through ACP-wide Science and Technology Innovations and Capacity Building;
7. Supports the mainstreaming of science and technology into ACP National and Regional development policies,
8. Welcomes the participation of ACP research institutions in the new instruments of the EC's Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) such as Networks of Excellence, Integrated Projects as well as increased opportunities for mobility and training of scientists. In the context of the mobility programme, the EC will strive to ensure that researchers from third countries, including ACP nationals, are encouraged to return to their home institutions after training in the EU,
9. Further welcomes the intention of the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission to propose to the joint ACP-EU institutions a set of priority areas for future ACP-EU co-operation in support of the ACP Vision, Declaration and Plan of Action on Research for Sustainable Development,
10. Invites the European Community to examine ways for a more proactive use of its development thematic budget lines to encourage, within their specific remits, funding for research for sustainable development.